

Triple Mother's Day Surprise by JoMo3

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Summary:

When she'd found out about Mother's Day, Eleven wanted to do something for the mother she didn't know she'd had. That eventually got her thinking about other people; a woman who she looked to as a mother figure, as well as a woman who might be a mother figure in the future.

Triple Mother's Day Surprise

"Are you sure about this, kid?"

El nodded.

She and Hopper were standing outside of a house they'd both visited once before; the Ives home. Eleven held a small flower pot and Hopper held the card she'd bought a week ago, after fretting over it and spending almost a half hour trying to decide. *It has to be perfect*, she'd told him.

"Okay, here we go," Hopper said. And with that, he knocked on the door.

Nothing came of it at first, but they then heard slippered feet shuffling across the wood floor. The curtain in the door moved to the side, and Becky Ives looked out at them, glancing from one to the other. Letting go of the curtain, she unlocked the door and opened it.

"Well, hey," Becky said, looking first at El, then Hopper, then back to her niece. "I didn't think I was going to see you again."

El looked down at her feet, and Hopper nudged her with his arm. "Sorry," she mumbled. "For...taking money."

"Well, then, I guess *I'm* sorry," Becky said, folding her arms. "For calling the police on you."

El finally looked up, and nodded her head.

"Can we come in?" Hopper asked.

Becky nodded, and stepped to the side. Eleven and Hopper entered the house and, after Becky had closed the door, the group headed to their destination.

Terry Ives still sat at her usual spot, eyes transfixed in front of her; there but not really there.

"We got one for you," Hopper said, shuffling the cards in his hand and

handing one to Becky.

"Thanks," she said, glancing at it and then looking back to see what El was going to do.

Eleven walked slowly into the room, holding the pot in front of her as she inched closer to her mother.

"Mama?" she asked.

"Rainbow..." Terry said quietly.

"H...Happy Mother's Day," El said, walking in and sitting in a nearby chair.

"Three to the left..."

"I got you this," El said, holding up the flower pot. "There's a flower inside."

"Sunflower..."

El smiled. "Yes, a sunflower. I thought it might...help you." She put the pot on the TV tray next to Terry. "And I got you a card," El said, looking over at Hopper. He made his way over and handed it to El.

"450..."

Eleven opened the card, and read what was inside. When she finished, she stood the card up next to the plant.

When she'd found out about Mother's Day, Eleven wanted to do something for the mother she didn't know she'd had. That eventually got her thinking about other people; a woman who she looked to as a mother figure, as well as a woman who might be a mother figure in the future. So she and Hopper had spent the better part of the last week getting things ready. Hopper bought what he needed to buy, and made an exception for Eleven to come out of hiding for a bit. The first stop had been to come out here, though El had been somewhat hesitant, seeing how things had ended last time.

The Hoppers (Jim and Jane) spent some time talking with Becky,

who promised she'd take care of the flower and would love to have them over again sometime. When Hopper decided they had to keep moving, El went back to her mom, and wrapped her in a hug that she knew wouldn't be returned.

"I love you, Mama," she whispered into her ear. "See you soon."

Sniffling, she said goodbye to her aunt, and she and Hopper were off.

"You okay?" Hopper asked once they got outside.

Eleven nodded, and wiped at her eyes.

"Okay. Round two."

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Their second stop was at the home of Joyce Byers. Eleven figured in the short amount of time she'd been out of the lab, Joyce had been more of a mother than anyone she'd known. That's why El now held another flower pot, this one with daisies, up to the Byers home.

Hopper knocked, and a moment later the door was opened by Will Byers.

"Hey Chief, hi El," he said, moving out of the way to let them in. El being here was no doubt a surprise, but the Chief was over on a semi-regular basis, so Will was accustomed to having him over.

In the months since the whole Mind-Flayer incident, the Byers home had, once again, been remodeled, and the messy living room that El remembered from before was now spic and span. During that time, Will and Eleven had developed a rapport between them. The two weren't as close as they were to their other friends, but they were getting there.

"Where's your mom?" Hopper asked Will.

"She's in her room, she'll be out in a minute," Will said. He looked at the bouquet in El's hands. "Is that for her?"

El nodded, her eyes taking in the room.

Jonathan poked his head in from the kitchen. "Hey guys," he said. "Why don't you come have a seat?"

So Will and the Hoppers went in and sat at the dining room table. The kitchen was alive, with something smelling delicious coming from the oven, and something sizzling on the stove.

"What's your mom cooking?" Hopper asked, as Jonathan turned down the heat on the stove.

"Oh. Nothing," Jonathan answered. "It's, uh...my gift, actually. I'm making dinner."

"*We're* making dinner," Will chimed in.

"All you've done is turn the stove on," Jonathan shot back.

"And if I hadn't, the meat would still be cold," Will pointed out. He ducked as Jonathan playfully threw a dish towel at him.

They heard a door open down the hallway, and then Joyce's voice, calling, "Who was at the door? Was it..." and Joyce stopped, standing at the edge of the kitchen when she saw who was there.

"Joyce," Hopper said.

"Hey, Hop," she said back. Seeing Eleven, she said "Hey, sweetie," and made her way over to hug the young girl. When she pulled back, she noticed the flowers that El was holding. "Who got you flowers?" she asked Eleven.

El shook her head, and handed them to Joyce. "For you."

"Me? Why? I..."

"She wanted to get you a Mother's Day gift," Hopper explained. "This is from her...from *us*, really...just, you know...as a thanks," he said, handing her the card he held.

Joyce put a hand to her chest, clearly taken aback by the gesture. "Thank you," she said. "Did you...did you see your mom today?" she asked El.

Eleven nodded, and the two briefly talked about El's trip over to the Ives home. When it was over, Joyce gave her another hug.

"Well thank you so much, sweetie," she said, smiling at the flowers. "I've got to find a vase for these."

"Matches your dress," El said, pointing to Joyce's attire.

Joyce was wearing a blue dress decorated with white flowers, and Hopper had to admit, she looked pretty good in it.

"It was a gift from my boys," Joyce said, looking over at her sons. "It's not too bad, right?" she asked, looking to both El and Hopper.

"Pretty," El pointed out.

"Really pretty," Hopper said, which caused Joyce to shyly look away for a moment. Clearing his throat, Hopper said, "Well, we've got one more stop to make, and I've got a feeling we're gonna be there a while. We'll see you all later, okay?"

The Byers and Hoppers said their goodbyes, and then Hopper led El back to the car.

"The card was from me," El said to Hop once they climbed inside his cruiser.

"Yeah, sorry about that."

"You could've got her something," El pointed out.

"Maybe next year," he said, starting up the car. "Round three?"

She nodded, and the two were on their way.

The third and final stop was, of course, the Wheeler home. Eleven had met Mrs. Wheeler, briefly, once at Christmas time. Hopper had decided to let her and her husband in on the secret that was Eleven. But now, as they pulled up to the house, Eleven could feel her heart beat faster, as she thought to herself, *this is Mike's mom* .

She didn't know much about Karen Wheeler, nor did Hopper. But Mike had told El what kind of flowers she liked, as well as other things she was a fan of.

At first Eleven had only planned on doing something for her own mother and Joyce. But two things brought this trip to the Wheelers' to fruition. The first being that this was Mike's mom, and because Mike was important to her, his mother should be as well. The second reason being that she had recently learned (thanks to her soaps) what a mother-in-law was. And she didn't know exactly what the future held for her, but she knew Mike was going to be a part of it.

Thus, a third batch of flowers, a third card, and a third trip were born.

Eleven eased out of the truck and took the last flowers from Hopper. Letting out a sigh, she and Hopper made their way to the front door. This time El rang the doorbell, and there was a moment before the door opened up, and Mike was there, looking taken aback.

"El?" he asked. "Is everything okay?"

"Hi, Mike," she said with a smile.

"Why are...I mean, I'm glad to see you," he said, going to take the flowers, but she shook her head.

"For your mom," she said.

"Oh." Mike knew that El was getting his mom something, but didn't think she'd be coming herself.

"Aren't you gonna invite us in, kid?" Hopper asked.

"Oh! Yeah," Mike said, moving out of the way. The Hoppers stepped inside and Mike closed the door behind them.

The TV was on, and Ted Wheeler was sitting in his Lay-Z Boy. His eyes glanced up as the two guests entered the house. Muting the television, he stood up. "Hello, Chief," he said, shaking Hopper's hand.

"Ted," Hopper said, nodding.

"Nice to see you again, El," Ted said.

"Hi," she answered quietly.

"Mooom!" Mike called. "Can you come here for a minute?"

"Michael..." they heard, Karen's voice coming from the stairs. "How many times have I..." she stopped, seeing the two visitors in her home. "Oh. Hi." She saw the packages in both El and Hopper's hands, and cast a confused look to Mike.

"This is for you," El said, stepping forward with the bouquet. "Mike...said they were your favorite."

Like Joyce, Karen put a hand to her chest, touched by the sentiment. She took the flowers, irises, and sniffed them. "Thank you. You didn't have to."

"She also got you this," Hopper said, handing Karen a wrapped package.

Karen put the flowers down, and unwrapped the gift; she was surprised to see a bottle of wine.

"Mike said you drink that a lot," El said, which got Mike to blush deeply.

Hopper nudged her, trying to get her to shut up, but Karen shook her head, smiling. "Thank you so much, El. This was so sweet of you." Bending down, she hugged the young girl. "We have some food, if you're hungry," Karen offered.

Hopper inwardly moaned, as he was more than ready to leave; but he'd promised El she could have a little time with Mike. So he nodded, as Karen went to find a vase for the flowers. Meanwhile, Mike to El's hand and the two disappeared into the basement to wait for the food to be ready.

"That was real nice of you, El," Mike told her once they got downstairs.

She shrugged. "Your mom is important to you, and you are important to me."

They both blushed and looked away from each other for a moment, before their eyes met once more.

"Did you see your mom today?"

She nodded, and told him about the other two trips she'd made.

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By the time El and Hopper got back to the cabin it was getting dark. As they made their way in, Hopper paused and looked at El. "You have a good day, kid?"

She smiled, and nodded her head. "Yes."

"Well, I'm glad I could help," he told her.

"Wait," she told him. He looked confused as she went into her room. She came back a moment later, holding a small box. "Here," she said, putting it in his hands before she looked down at the floor.

Hopper turned the lightweight box in his hands, then slowly opened it. Inside was a mug, with finger-painted flowers decorating it.

"I know you're not a mom," she said, still looking at her feet, "But thank you. For..taking care of me. And...taking me out today." She finally looked up, and was confused to see Hopper was looking away.

In truth, he was wiping away the tears that had begun, so she wouldn't see. When he finally turned back around, though his eyes were still wet, he nodded his head, and said "You're welcome, kid. Come here." He wrapped an arm around her, and kissed the top of her head. "Thanks," he whispered into her hair.

She smiled as they let go, wiping away a tear of her own.

There was the sound of a crackling walkie, and then they heard Mike's voice, saying "El? You there?"

She looked towards her room, then back at Hopper.

He nodded his head, saying “Go on, don’t keep him waiting.”

She gave him a smile, then went off to her room to talk with Mike on her Supercom.

Hopper, meanwhile, went and got a beer out of the fridge. Smiling, he decided to pour it into the mug El had gotten him. Still smiling, he sat down on the couch and took a sip.